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LETTER DATED 27 SEPTEMBER 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I should like to inform you of another series of terrorist attacks conducted in the past two days by the Bosnian Serbs against civilian targets on the territory of Croatia.

On 25 September, at 1420 hours, 1 howitzer shell exploded at Rajevo Selo, causing electrical grid failure; from 1940 to 2010 hours, 15 howitzer shells landed on Jasenovac; at 2340 hours, one projectile landed on Ivanic-Grad; at 2345 hours, one mortar round landed on Hrvatska/Kostajnica. On 26 September, at 0107 hours, one Orkan missile exploded at the municipal cemetery in the town of Novska, causing considerable damage; at 0512 hours, one missile with an aerosol warhead impacted at the town of Kutina and exploded in the vicinity of a chemical plant in Kutina, causing serious damage; at 0815 hours, one Orkan missile with a cluster-bomb warhead exploded in the centre of the town of Pozega, wounding nine civilians, three very seriously.

Unprovoked attacks on strictly civilian targets constitute a violation of the laws of war, and their perpetrators have to be brought to justice. This violation was exacerbated by the employment of internationally forbidden munitions.

The attack on the Kutina chemical plant raises very serious concerns, owing to the possible consequences of such an attack. Yesterday's missile deviated from its target by only 1,000 metres; the explosion of the aerosol warhead occurred at the level of 150 metres over the town, causing destruction and severe damage to over 20 per cent of the town's windows and roofs. The missile employed was a modified Soviet-built SA-2 Dvina guided AA missile (marked SDU48B in Cyrillic lettering on the tail), most probably with a proximity trigger.

At the time of the attack, as well as during all the previous five attacks - most recently on 8 and 18 September, in which Orkan and Luna missiles were employed - the meteorological situation with stable atmospheric pressure and wind direction allowed for maximum civilian casualties in the town of Kutina. Had any of these attacks impacted the Kutina chemical plant directly, the town would have suffered thousands of casualties.

Enclosed please find a study* on the possible ecological consequences of a successful attack on the Kutina chemical plant, resulting in partial or complete destruction of some or all of the facilities employing toxic chemicals. The study is based on the previous five attacks on the plant.

The conclusions of the study indicate that even a partial destruction of some of the plant's production or storage facilities would result in a most severe ecological disaster and would cause tens of thousands of casualties in the towns of Kutina, Sisak, Ivanic-Grad, Velika Gorica, Zagreb and elsewhere, while the toxic cloud would reach across the borders of the Republic of Croatia, over 200 kilometres from Kutina into Slovenia, Austria and Hungary.

Croatia remains committed to the peace process and would not undertake any action that would undermine its successful conclusion in this delicate and very important phase. However, the Bosnian Serb irregular forces continue to use every opportunity of favourable atmospheric conditions in the past three weeks to make attempts to destroy the Kutina Plant. Should those attacks continue, in order to ensure the safety of its civilian population and the environment, the Republic of Croatia shall be obliged to use all the necessary measures to neutralize the offending launching positions.

I would kindly request your assistance in circulating the present letter and its annex* as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ambassador Dr. Mario NOBILO
Permanent Representative

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* The study may be consulted at the Secretariat, room S-3520.